



COA/UFLAC POSITION PAPER

The Fire Chief is unilaterally moving forward a proposal for a 6 month trial program that will remove the inside firefighter from 22 truck companies in order to open 11 Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulances. United Firefighters of Los Angeles City (UFLAC) and the Chief Officer's Association (COA) embrace the idea of expanding the number of BLS ambulances but are opposed to doing so at the expense of further weakening our existing firefighting resources. The basis of this opposition is grounded in a clear understanding of NFPA standards and the harmful impact that our organization's reduced service levels will have on firefighter safety.

Prior to the current state of affairs, the LAFD operated with nearly 50 task forces and another 52 engine companies covering 106 neighborhood fire districts. With nearly 130 Advance Life Support and BLS ambulances, our field resources were fully staffed and capable of addressing a variety of fire and medical emergencies at a moment's notice. Then the Fire Chief and the Mayor eliminated the funding for 11 engine companies, 7 truck companies 4 ambulances, 24 EMS Captains, 30 EIT positions, 6 Battalion Commanders, 3 Division Commanders and ordered the closure and dismantling of our Recruit Training program. These actions ultimately eliminated over 300 positions. Today, our ability to provide an appropriate level of services has been compromised because of these cuts – but you rarely hear that. We heard that our response times would improve – but they did not. And the failure to recruit, hire, and train firefighters and paramedics for the remaining positions has resulted in assign hiring and resource closures on a routine basis.

The Fire Chief cites a 6% increase in EMS transports during the first 2 months of this year as the basis for his proposal, but he makes no mention of the anomalies caused by the flu epidemic. UFLAC and the COA believe that the Chief's data is flawed. The trial program has no parameters regarding which neighborhoods will receive these resources and there are no defined expectations or plan to add new ambulances to the Departments aging fleet. Even after removing 7 truck companies from field assignments, the Fire Chief is demonstrating a willingness to further weaken the remaining group of 22 truck companies by removing one of the three firefighters who are currently assigned to these resources.

Public safety and firefighter safety in Los Angeles, has never been placed in a more compromising position than the one we find ourselves in now. The Fire Chief entertains this proposal knowing that it reduces firefighter safety and violates NFPA standards for recommended staffing of fire companies in large metropolitan areas. Los Angeles is the 2nd largest city in the United States and our Fire Chief needs to understand what we already know. Our Fire Department has hit rock-bottom and needs to start moving forward – not backward. Public safety in Los Angeles needs your support. Please stand alongside your elected union leaders in support of our united opposition to this plan. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andy Fox".

Andy Fox, President and
Executive Board
Los Angeles Chief Officer's Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Lima".

Frank Lima, President and
Executive Board
United Firefighters of Los Angeles City